

Song of Ascents 9 - Ps 128

Blessed Are All Who Fear the Lord

Psa 128:1-6 NIV A song of ascents. Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in obedience to him. 2 You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. 3 Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. 4 Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the LORD. 5 May the LORD bless you from Zion; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 6 May you live to see your children's children-- peace be on Israel.

What are the blessings?

1. You will eat the fruit of your labor - "the work you do will give you what you need to live"
2. Blessings and **prosperity** will be yours - **bold** below is the same Hebrew word
 - a. Pro 28:6 NIV **Better the poor** whose walk is blameless than the rich whose ways are perverse.
 - b. Pro 22:1 NIV A good name is more desirable than great riches; **to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.**
 - c. Pro 19:22 NIV What a person desires is unfailing love; **better to be poor** than a liar.
 - d. Pro 19:1 KJV **Better** is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.
 - e. Pro 16:16 KJV How much **better** is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!
 - f. Pro 16:8 NIV **Better** a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice.
3. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house,
4. Your children will be like olive shoots around your table
 - a. (This blessing is confirmed - see also Pro 22:4, Ps 112:1-3, Psa 115:11-15)
5. Blessing extends to your city
6. Blessing extends to multiple generations Children's Children

The Fear of the Lord is the foundation of this blessing

We seek to be blessed in work and family. We seek to gain this blessing in many ways...but in this psalm He introduces the fear of the Lord as a foundation for this blessing.

The blessing described here (twice) is to those who fear the Lord, and he adds emphasis that those who fear the Lord are those who walk in obedience to Him.

- vs 1. **Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to Him**
- vs 4 A 2nd time - **Yes, this will be the blessing for the man who fears the LORD**

What is the fear of the Lord?

1) It is described in Ps 128:1 as "**walking in obedience to him**"

2) While the idea of reverent awe is part of it, fear of God **includes understanding how much God hates sin and fearing His judgment on sin.**

- Act 5:4-11 NIV ...You have not lied just to human beings but to God." 5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And **great fear seized all who heard** what had happened....9 Peter said to her, "How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord?...she fell down at his feet and died...**Great fear seized the whole church** and

all who heard about these events.

3) It is coupled with the Love for God - that we desire to please Him and want to do nothing to displease Him.. (The fear of the Lord and the Love of God are two ends of a spectrum that direct our hearts to obedience)

- Ps 33:18 But the eyes of the Lord are on **those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love**
- Ps 103:11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, **so great is his love for those who fear him**
- Ps 147:11 the Lord delights in **those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.**
- Ps 97:10 Let **those who love the Lord hate evil**, for he guards the lives of his faithful ones and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.
- Pro 8:13 ESV The **fear of the LORD is hatred of evil**. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.

Jesus and the fear of God

- Isa 11:1-3 ESV There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. 2 And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the **fear of the LORD**. 3 And **his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD**. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear,
- Heb 5:7-8 KJV Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; 8 Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

He delighted in the fear of the Lord - and His desire to do His will superseded His own thoughts "if there is any way let this cup pass from me", YET NOT MY WILL BUT YOURS...

He learned obedience by what he suffered (not that he was taught a lesson...it is that he learned/experienced the full extent of what obedience is about - it was a full commitment-100% of whatever is the will of the father)

In a practical way "Turning" toward the fear of the Lord and obedience

1. **Turn** my heart toward your statutes
2. **Turn** my eyes away from worthless things
3. So that we never **turn** away from Him

Psa 119:33-38 NIV Teach me, LORD, the way of your decrees, that I may follow it to the end. 34 Give me understanding, so that I may keep your law and obey it with all my heart. 35 Direct me in the path of your commands, for **there I find delight**. 36 **Turn my heart toward** your statutes and not toward selfish gain. 37 **Turn my eyes away** from worthless things; preserve my life according to your word. 38 Fulfill your promise to your servant, **so that you may be feared**.

Jer 32:40 I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and **I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.**

1) Turn my heart to your statutes

Ps 112:1-3 Blessed are those who fear the Lord, **who find great delight in his commands.**

Delight in Hebrew

A primitive root; properly to incline to; by implication (literally but rarely) to bend; figuratively to be pleased with, desire: - X any at all, (have, take) delight, desire, favour, like, move, be (well) pleased, have pleasure, will, would.

Psa 119:97 NIV Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.

Psa 119:163 NIV I hate and detest falsehood but I love your law.

2) Turn my eyes away from worthless things

Fear of God is not only looking at sin as something we can be forgiven of, but that sin is something to be hated

Pro 3:7 ESV Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, **and turn away from evil.**

Pro 16:6 ESV By steadfast love and faithfulness iniquity is atoned for, and **by the fear of the LORD one turns away from evil.**

3) So that I will never Turn away from Him

Jer 32:39-41 NIV I will give them singleness of heart and action, **so that they will always fear me** and **that all will then go well for them** and for their children after them. 40 I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and **I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.** 41 I will rejoice in doing them good and will assuredly plant them in this land with all my heart and soul.

Ps 86:11 Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name.

How do we get the fear of the Lord

Pro 2:1-5 NIV My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, 2 turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding-- 3 indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, 4 and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, 5 then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

IF

1. **Accept** his words - carry, buy, mingle, infold, reserve, seize
2. **Store up** [ESV treasure] his commands - to hide, hoard, protect
3. **Turn** your ear to wisdom - prick up the ear - to hearken
4. **Apply** your heart to understanding - to stretch out or bend
5. **Call out** for insight and **cry aloud** understanding - call out by name

6. **Look** and **search** as for hidden treasure - to strive after

THEN

1. You will understand the fear of the Lord

Examples: Their fear of displeasing God enabled them obey Him in extreme circumstances:

Who did Shadrach Meshach and Abednego fear?

Nebuchadnezzar: If you don't bow down, I will throw you into the fiery furnace.

The Lord: You should worship the Lord your God and Him only.

Dan 3:28 Then Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise be to the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who has sent his angel and rescued his servants! They trusted in him and defied the king's command and were willing to give up their lives rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.

Abraham willing to offer His son

Gen 22:12 NIV "Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. **Now I know that you fear God**, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."

Noah moved with fear and built an ark

Heb 11:6-7 NIV And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. 7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, **in holy fear built an ark** to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that is in keeping with faith.